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Finley Letters

James B. Finley Letters

4-29-1837

Letter from Thomas Chesnut to James B. Finley

Thomas Chesnut

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Recd J. B. Finley
Piquette
Chas.
May 3 1837
Bourneville
May 3 1837

Bourneville Apr 29th 1837

Dear Brother Finley

I have frequently since I saw you last took up
my ^{self} to address a few lines to you and until now
as frequently said it slow from this consideration
that I had nothing to write of much importance
and perhaps my communication would not be
sufficiently interesting to justify the measure
but hearing dear Broth of your affliction and feeling
a deep interest in your welfare I have ventured to
trouble you with a few lines I sincerely regret to
hear of your ill health and lament that disease
has compelled you to retire from your field of
labor but in these things we must learn submission
to the Lord knowing that he is too wise to err and
too good to do any thing that is not for our best
best interest if we will only bow down to him
in all the dispensations of his providences and grace
yet I devoutly trust that the Lord will restore
you to health to your friends and to the Church
that you may resume your former labor of love
and be instrumental in doing much more
good ~~and~~ in bringing many more from nei-
ther darkness into the marvelous light of the Gospel
for this Brother Finley I believe many prayers
daily ascend the hill of the Lord from Chillicothe
District This Conference year Dear Broth thus far
has bin to me replete with trials & conflicts sore
and severe but till the present the Lord is
my deliverer I meet with many discouragements
in trying to preach frequently bowed down and no
not what to do

I shall not attempt to describe to you the awe and responsibility I feel frequently in attempting to preach the Gospel I expected when I first commenced that the cross would soon cease to be so weighty, but this expectation as yet has not been realized. Though I thank God it does not affect my mind as it did at first some of my best efforts have been when the cross at first appeared almost insupportable some times I am much afflicted in mind for fear of being an intruder in the Lords vineyard I have always felt and still feel that if God has called me to preach he has called me to travel or in other words to devote my time entirely to his service and reasoning from the general superintendence and government of the Lord over his church and presuming if the Lord calls he will prepare the way and having failed in this the natural conclusion is that in this particular at least I have been mistaken and if mistaken in one possibly in both and in this manner I reason with myself until my head gets giddy and I almost lose my senses. At other times God blesses me in my public efforts and I feel a clear conviction that I am in the line of duty and think I never will doubt again and thus I go alternately one day believing and perhaps the next day doubting.

I have ~~heard~~ lately some young Brethren preachers say they have not nor never have had since ^{they} commenced the first remaining doubt of their call to the ministry; not so with me. Fearing from what I have heard that you possibly may soon be called to your reward I trouble you with these few lines in order to ask your blessing and an epistle of advice. If the Lord in his providence soon should ~~shortly~~ call you home and it was yours to give and I could in any wise think myself worthy I should pray that you bestow to me your mantle.

If you are able please answer me

J. B. Finley

Pray for your
unworthy Broth
Wm. Chesnut